# Request for Qualifications: *Developing models for equitable community-led strategies to reduce emissions causing climate change*

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***Issued: February 17, 2023 – Deadline for Response: 5:00 on March 6, 2023***

Send responses to: jherb@ejb.rutgers.edu with *Transformative Climate Communities* in the subject line

## Background:

With support from The Energy Foundation, the [New Jersey Climate Change Resource Center](https://njclimateresourcecenter.rutgers.edu/) at Rutgers University is collaborating with the [New Jersey Climate Change Alliance](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cmarjorie%5CDownloads%5Cnjadapt.rutgers.edu) to provide individual grants of $25,000 to five community-based organizations in locations in New Jersey with [overburdened communities](https://dep.nj.gov/ej/communities/) for the purpose of demonstrating replicable strategies for reducing greenhouse gas emissions in ways that provide economic, health and/or environmental benefit to those communities. This effort is inspired by the California [Transformative Climate Communities](https://sgc.ca.gov/programs/tcc/) Program which “empowers the communities most impacted by pollution to choose their own goals, strategies, and projects to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and local air pollution.”

## Purpose

The purpose of this Request for Qualifications is to identify five organizations to which the Climate Change Resource Center at Rutgers University will provide $25,000 individual subawards. The overall goal of these awards is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through community-driven projects that are designed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions significantly over time, leverage additional funding sources, and provide health, environmental and/or economic benefits to the community.

The anticipated start date for the awards is April 3, 2023, with an end date of August 31, 2023.

The $25,000 awards are considered planning grants that are intended to support the design and strategic development of initiatives that achieve the initiative’s overall goal and that increase the capacity of the organization to advance ongoing and sustainable climate change actions. A priority for this effort is to ensure benefit to overburdened communities as defined by New Jersey’s environmental justice law (N.J.S.A. 13:1D-157) and as identified by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection at: <https://dep.nj.gov/ej/communities/>. The New Jersey Climate Change Resource Center will make every effort to provide necessary assistance that will benefit the grantees’ initiatives such as data analysis, meeting facilitation, and research.

Focus areas for these grants include but are not limited to efforts related to:

* Affordable and sustainable housing;
* Access to affordable transit;
* Electric bicycle and ride share programs;
* Solar installation and energy efficiency;
* Water-energy efficiency installations;
* Urban greening and green infrastructure;
* Bicycle and pedestrian facilities; and
* Waste reduction and recycling, including food waste.

Eligible organizations include:

* Community-based organizations;
* Nonprofit organizations;
* Faith-based organizations;
* Coalitions or associations of nonprofits;
* Community development finance institutions; and
* Community development corporations.

Organizations that receive the funding must agree to the following:

* To prepare a brief monthly progress report on a survey form provided by Rutgers University and to participate in a monthly virtual meeting with the Rutgers program manager(s) to discuss progress;
* To prepare two blog posts that will be posted on the Climate Change Resource Center and New Jersey Climate Change Alliance websites; one in the first two months of the grant and one in the last month of the grant.

## To respond to this Request for Qualifications

This Request for Qualifications (RFQ) is being sent to several New Jersey organizations that are known to be involved in community-based climate change efforts. Other organizations may apply. Questions regarding this RFQ may be sent by 5:00 pm on March 2, 2023 via email with the subject line *questions about TCC RFQ* to: jherb@ejb.rutgers.edu. All questions and answers will be posted within 48 hours at <https://njclimateresourcecenter.rutgers.edu/request-for-qualifications/>

To apply in response to this RFQ, the organization should complete the attached form and email it to jherb@ejb.rutgers.edu with *Transformative Climate Communities* in the subject line by 5:00 pm EST on Monday, March 6.

## Selection criteria

Five organizations will be chosen to receive the $25,000 awards for purposes of undertaking initiatives designed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions significantly over time, leverage additional funding sources, and provide health, environmental and/or economic benefits to the community. Applications will be reviewed based on the following criteria:

1. 25% - Demonstration of the organization’s effective and impactful past and current work regarding engaging overburdened communities on climate change, sustainability, environmental justice and other related issues.
2. 60% - Demonstration of a clear and organized statement of work that includes:
	* + The problem or challenge facing the community.
		+ The approach, steps, and/or tasks that will be undertaken and a timeline for implementation.
		+ The outputs/outcomes that are anticipated at the end of the initiative.
3. 15% - Inclusion of a clear and efficient budget.

**Response to Rutgers University Request for Qualifications: *Developing models for equitable community-led strategies to reduce emissions causing climate change***

*Instructions: please write or type answers to the 15 questions below. Please complete and send completed form by email to* *jherb@ejb.rutgers.edu* *by 5:00 pm on Monday, March 6 with* ***Transformative Climate Communities*** *in the subject line.*

1. **Name of Organization:**
2. **Contact person:**
3. **Name of person who will be leading the focus group effort if your organization is chosen to be given a subaward**:
4. **Organizational address, website, telephone and email address for contact person:**
5. **Number of paid full-time staff in organization:**
6. **Location of physical office or headquarters:**
7. **List of Board of Trustees/Directors or link to list**:
8. **Does your organization have 501(c)3 status? Check one:**

Yes \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

No \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. **Summarize the qualifications of the person who will be leading the effort for your organization** (no more than 300 words):
2. **Please affirm that your organization will not use any portion of the granted funds for purposes of lobbying as defined by the federal Internal Revenue Service** (<https://www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits/lobbying>).

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1. **In the space below and in less than 1,000 words, please tell us about your organization’s past and current work with regard to engaging your community on climate change, sustainability, environmental justice and other related issues as well as your organization’s past and current engagement with populations in your community that are disproportionately affected by climate change.**
2. **In the space below and in less than 1,000 words, please tell us about what the focus of your initiative will be specific to the $25,000 in funds from this grant. Discuss:**
* **The problem or challenge facing your community that you seek to address.**
* **The approach, steps, and/or tasks you will undertake to address those problem(s) and challenge(s) and a timeline for their implementation.**
* **The outputs/outcomes that you anticipate at the end of your initiative.**
1. **Please use this space to point to any materials/links that you believe demonstration your organization’s qualifications to undertake the efforts associated with this project:**
2. **Please explain any technical assistance that you will or may need from the New Jersey Climate Change Resource Center at Rutgers University:**

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1. **Please provide a budget for your organization’s use of the $25,000 grant using the following categories:**
* Salaries (name of staff person and % of their time for how long)
* Fringe benefits (please include fringe benefit rate)
* Other direct costs, including but not limited to: travel, supplies, meeting expenses, etc.
* Provide information on any in-kind or leveraged contributions that will be provided which may include leveraged dollars and/or in-kind staff time.